

~~said at least one heatable plate including a first heatable plate and a second heatable plate disposed having adjacent surfaces configured to receive a wafer therebetween, said gas varying the temperature of said processing area.~~

9. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 8, wherein said gas is taken from the group consisting of He, H₂, O₂, Ar, N₂ and gas mixtures containing He, H₂, O₂, Ar, and N₂.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 8, wherein said internal cavity further comprises a buffer to disperse said first gas throughout said internal cavity.

11.-16. (Canceled)

REMARKS

Claims 2-6 and 8-10 are now pending. No Claims are amended. Claims 1, 7 and 13-16 are canceled.

Claims 2-5 and 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Granneman (WO 98/01890). Claims 5 and 9 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Granneman in view of Miyasaka (USPN 6,017,779). Claims 6 and 10 are further rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Granneman in view of Zhao et al. (USPN 6,189,482). Applicant overcomes the rejection as follows.

Claim 2 sets forth, *inter alia*, a first heatable plate and a second heatable plate "defining a processing area therebetween." Gas emitted from each heatable plate enters the processing area thereby "varying the temperature of said processing area." Applicant could find no teaching in Granneman of such a configuration.

In contrast, Granneman discloses heating two plates that are in close enough proximity that "[i]n practice, it has been found that almost immediately after it has entered the gap between the side sections 6 and 7 the wafer assumes the temperature thereof." (Granneman, p. 7, lines 29-32) Applicant could find no teaching or suggestion in Granneman that states that the gas exiting passages 10 is at "a first temperature" but is emitted "at a second temperature." Moreover, there is no teaching or suggestion in Granneman that the gas supplied via passages 10 varies the temperature of the area between the sections or that such variation is desirable.

In Granneman, there is no need to cause a variation in the temperature since it is disclosed that the wafer reaches the temperature of the section so quickly. Accordingly, Claim 2 is allowable over the cited reference.

Claim 8 sets forth, *inter alia*, "a first heatable plate and a second heatable plate ...defining a processing area therebetween, each of said heatable plates including...an outlet portion defining a plurality of holes for emitting said gas to said processing area; ...said gas varying the temperature of said processing area." As stated above, Applicant could find no teaching or suggestion in Granneman that the gas emitted from the heated plates varies the temperature of the processing area. Accordingly, Claim 8 is allowable.

Claims 3-6 depend from Claim 2 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reason as Claim 2. Claims 9 and 10 depend from Claim 8 and are therefore allowable for at least the same reason as Claim 8.

CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, pending Claims 2-6 and 8-10 are now in condition for allowance and allowance of the application is hereby solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or concerns, the Examiner is hereby requested to telephone Applicant's Attorney at (949) 752-7040.

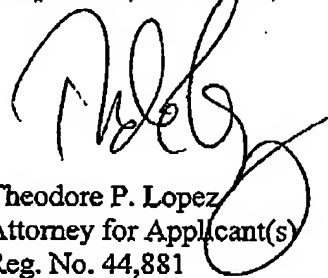
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January 22, 2004

Respectfully submitted,


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